



The Daily Movie Magazine

CLOSE-UPS of the MOVIE GAME

By HENRY M. NEELY

Cutting a Film Is More of a Job Than You Realize

ABOUT every so often you will read on this page or in the fan magazines that Director Percy DeMille has finished shooting a new film and is now busy "cutting" it. I thought that most fans knew what this meant, but one fan asked me about it a few days ago and a little investigation among other fans revealed the fact that not one of them had any real conception of what the process of cutting really is.

So I phoned around to various studios in New York to find a director who had this little job to hand, and the result was an invitation from William Nigh to pay a visit to the Warner plant and sit around and watch him during the process. Nigh has recently finished shooting "Her Daughter-in-law," with Vera Gordon as the star and which will be of even more interest to readers of this paper with a part taken by Marion Heist, one of the "lunatics up" in our own beauty counter which closed me so long ago. And incidentally Nigh was warm in his praise of the way my story was shown by Marion. She can have a part with me any time the winds blow.

I'm not very strong on my ancient history, but I seem to remember pictures in the schoolbooks showing a guy named Laocoon or something and his two sons bound on the north, south, east and west by serpents. Snakes all around 'em, if you recall it as I do. That's what Bill Nigh looked like when I went into the cutting room to watch him work—only Bill hasn't two sons—but at least they weren't with him that day. And Bill was dressed, which is more than you can say for old man Laocoon and the two younger Laocoons.

But there were a couple of reels of film on winding machines on the table in front of him and miles of it in a big fiber waste basket alongside and in between and winding all around Bill and hanging over his arms and neck and shoulders, and all of it on the floor and also the legs of his chair were more miles and miles of it, and in great bunches on the walls, messes which I've never seen before. It's supposed to be some sort of insulation, of course, yet never do I understand.

Bill was engaged in pulling film up by the yard, mounting it up to the light, looking at it to see what the scene was, pulling up another yard, looking at it, another look, and so on until he came to just exactly the scene he wanted. Then he flashed out a pair of scissors, snipped the film, took an ordinary paper clip and attached one end to the end of a piece he had already picked out and then began again the process of looking for more stuff he wanted.

TO a casual visitor it wouldn't look any more orderly or sane or intelligent than it sounds as I tell it. But Bill knew every second what he was doing, and every now and then he picked up a hand magnifying glass and examined the film through that so that the picture thus enlarged would give him the little detail he was following.

TO UNDERSTAND just what Bill was doing, it will be necessary first to watch some of the shooting of the story. Let's suppose we are in the studio three or four weeks ago. There are something like seven or eight John and Mary or whatever it is sitting by the fireside on one side of the room. It's a long shot, that is, the camera is far enough away to show the fireplace and its lamp and the dian on which they are sitting. They are talking with great enthusiasm, though it's hard to get health out those mugs. We shoot this long shot. Then they get it all over again and we shoot it from closer up, to make them look bigger on the screen.

Marx says, "I have a notion to snap you which will knock your eye out. I'm over heat." So they stop and come over here, and after shooting them doing it we take the cameras over and set them up for a long shot of the table on the other side of the room. When we are ready Marx and John walk on to the scene, Marx pulls open a drawer in the table, takes out a paper, hands it to John and says, "Read them words." And John reads 'em and starts in horror and gasps "My gawd!" as they always do when they read their words in the movies.

Then John slumps down in a chair, completely flabbergasted, which is a high-brow way of saying Marx has made good his threat to knock his eye out. We shoot the scene as a long shot first and then do it all over for close-ups.

Now let's see what Bill Nigh's job is when he comes to cut this. In the first place, each scene has been shot by two, three, four—maybe six—cameras from various angles. The negative is developed and a print is made from all the shots. First thing Bill does is to see this print run through two or three times in the projection room and pick out the best shot of each scene.

FOR this particular photograph they shot a total of 28,000 feet, or about five and one-third miles of film. The finished product will be something like seven reels or 500 feet, but as these will be over a thousand feet of takes re攝ed, the actual production film that survives will not exceed 600 feet. So that for just an average-sized feature of this kind, OVER FORTY MILES OF FILM must be cut out and thrown away.

SO the first job is to gather the rough shots of each scene. Then Nigh goes to the cutting room and sits down at his desk for the long and laborious task of "match ing up." In the scene we have watched in the studio we begin with the long shot at the fire-side. We start it over here and there and tuck a piece of the close-up shooting Marx or John doing whatever it is they are supposed to say.

But before shooting the long shot we just use the magnifying glass on it, so as to cut it just as the camera does, a week, and we have almost the consecutive just at that moment, so that the effect on the screen will be continuous. It would be fatal to let the long shot run out. Marx has finished her speech and the flash is shot, showing her just beginning to speak.

Likewise when they rise to come over heat we may let them walk well out of the picture and then run in the shot of the table and allow them to walk in. This also makes an action seem continuous. If we didn't let them walk out of the first part of the scene at least start to walk out or it started the table shot showing them standing, we'd guess of getting them come in there would be the impression of jump or jump action.

So, having got the table set, it's a rough dose-up of Marx talking in part of the long shot, moving back and forth from her house. We let this long shot run out, he begins to read, and this brings an emotion we want to emphasize; we see parts of the close-up of John where he registers horror and gasps "My gawd!" and begins to slump down in the chair.

But we mustn't let him slump entirely out of the close-up. It must be cut exactly that point that shows him beginning to slump, and then we must cut again to the long shot so we can see the whole scene and John taking the chair on the other.

With this first string assembled by the girls working in the place, we adjourn to the projection room again to see just how looks on the screen and decide what else we can cut out. We have almost, almost time as long as we want it. Then we go on again to the cutting room and begin a tedious process of examining everything that has been shot, edited, and finally we get on seven reels, including tabs.

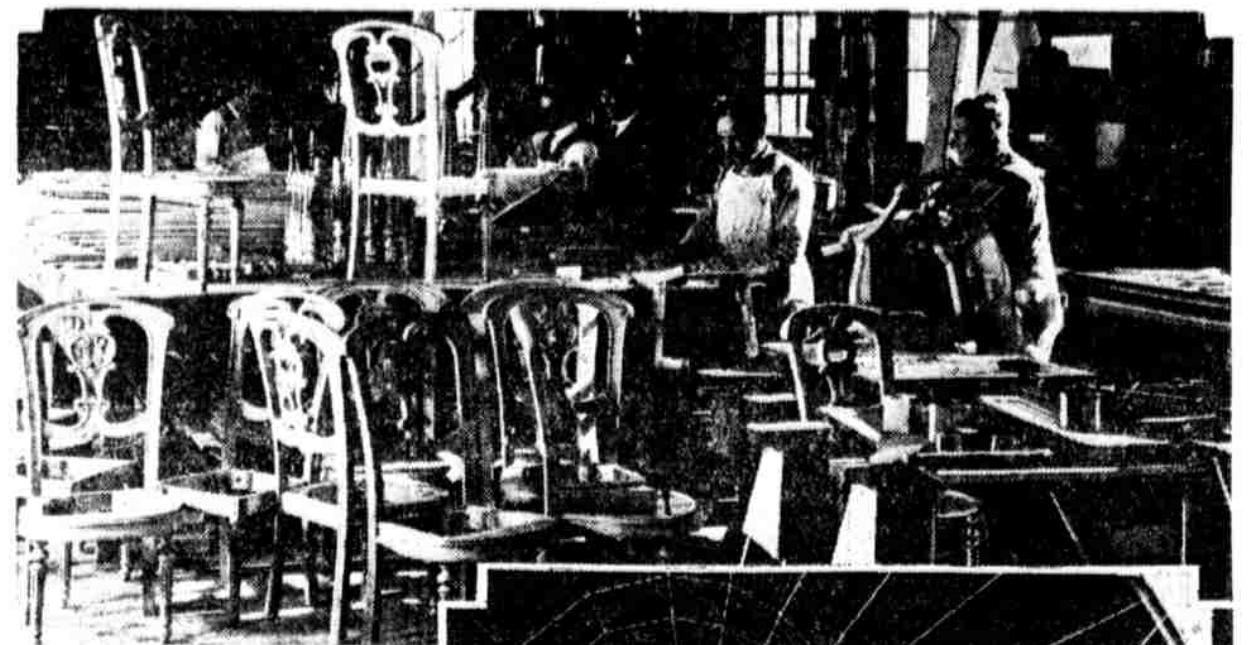
YET we want it about one reel. So we take Nigh and run over to him. And it has taken him more than two weeks to do the cutting. From the final cutting of this reel the scene itself will be cut, and it's from that moment that all the prints so far in thousands of theaters all over the country will be done. It's about as safe to try to interrupt a director who's cutting as it is to be with a saw blade. And you can't blame either the director or the blade.

THE SEASHORE KNOWS NO COMPANY

Three picture concerns are represented in this group, but they are just having a good time on the sand and water is far from their minds. They are, reading from left to right, Bert Lytell, Theodore Roberts (minus his cigar), Lionel Belmore and Sir Gilbert Parker.



THINGS THE FANS NEVER SEE



CONFESIONS OF A STAR

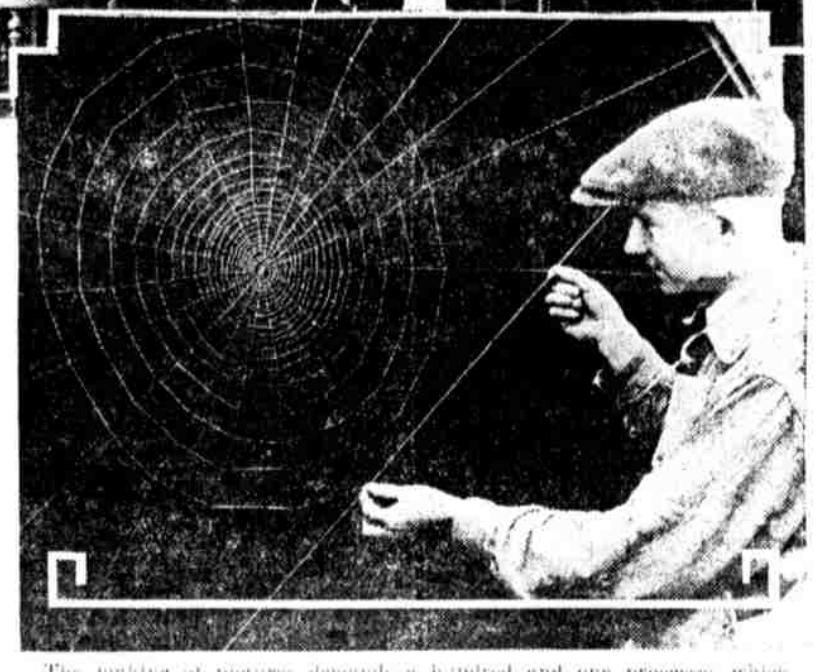
As Told to
INEZ KLUMPH

CHAPTER XLVI

FIRST of all I went to my own set, thinking perhaps Malcolm Sandy would be there, but he wasn't. I could hardly bear to look at the little room, where Phyllis Fairchild, was sitting on the big divanport before the open fire, just where I'd planned to sit.

"I compliment you on your stability as an interior decorator," she called to me, and I had to swallow hard to keep back the sobs that came into my throat. "I'm going to do my apartment over," she countered on. "Won't you come up and advise me on it?" And then her director came in with Rosy Miss Fairchild. Lights came on and she stopped.

The making of pictures demands a hundred and one processes which never show on the silver sheet. The top picture shows the carpenters at Universal City. They seem to be making enough chairs for a hundred mansions. The lower picture shows that valuable individual, the property man. He's evidently making an immense spider web for what purpose? It would be hard to conjecture.



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"Many of those who write for the screen know little about writing. I must admit that many are not authors—they are 'hacks' or authors who have allowed themselves to be called 'hacks.' Few screen writers possess a working knowledge of the screen's technique. Until recently the average author came to the motion-picture field with an attitude of condescension."

W. DE MILLE SAYS SCREEN 'IBSEN' IS SURE TO COME

WILLIAM DE MILLE, who is now working on "Miss Lulu Bett," has always had a definite theory on the photoplay proposition. The other day he summed some of his ideas up and here they are:

"An art can develop only to the extent that its audience develops with it, for no art can ever run too far ahead of its patrons. In the advancement of motion-picture production especially this adage holds true. Two factors, however, have made possible the quick development of this art branch—the relative crudeness of the art and the relative expertness of the motion-picture audience."

"The average patron of the spoken stage attends the theatre a few times a year, whereas the average patron of the motion-picture attends twice a week, developing the same degree of appreciation and expertness as that little group of New Yorkers that goes to the theatre twice a week, or often. What marks the 'first nighter' expert is that he attends the theatre continually and keeps in touch—in key—with the art. Motion-picture audiences, by the same standard, are all 'first-night' audiences."

"It is necessary for the makers of motion pictures to pull that great mass of photo-mechanics out with them and develop its sense of appreciation. The remarkable thing is the degree of development the motion-picture audience has shown in so short a time."

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"**Y**OU gentlemen know nothing about this—let a great artist show you how to do it." It was the attitude of literary men who came to the studios, but the authors who are coming in today are willing to be convinced that there is something that they do not know.

"It would surprise you if I gave you any idea of how impossible the first scenarios of some great authors have been, because these authors had the wrong idea. No man ever made a success of anything by writing down to it."

"People who try to write plays, whether for the stage or for the screen, and who lack the one quality necessary to success—the ability to be interesting—do not fulfill the functions of either the stage or the screen, while their function is, primarily, to be interesting. People who fail to interest us, 'The public is a very low type,' we have a wonderful grasp of humanity, yet the damed fools don't like our work!'"

"But I have discovered that if a play is interesting (which the people have a right to demand) no excellence of literature ever made such a play fail. It is the absence of interest that makes the play fail, but if the play is really a good play, it succeeds. But no amount of money will make a bad play succeed."

"The next generation will contain the greatest masters of the screen. We are the Hamlets, the Bon Jons, of the Hamlets like—we are making an art form. If Shakespeare had not found the art form created by Marlowe, his own art would have taken much longer to grow. We are making an art form for the motion picture, darkly and in different schools. Among the men who come after us, there will be Shakespeareans of a very thorough series of expeditions of research. I might add that it is proven more than an engrossing study."

"Conditions in motion-picture production have changed vastly since that time. During the first few years of the motion picture it existed simply as a photo-mechanical curiosity. People went to the theatre to see Niagara Falls or Italian officers riding their horses furiously over dangerous obstacles. It was a picture that moved that was the attraction."

"**T**HEN gradually the motion picture became an means of expressing emotional situation, and that was the beginning of the modern motion picture."

"The public demand that this new

DE MILLE IN A REFLECTIVE MOOD



The noted director, megaphone in hand and script in lap, is turning some fine point over in his mind. Read what he has to say on photoplay art.

Expose of Fraudulent Spiritualists in Karger Film Brings Threats

PUBLICATION of the fact that Maxwell Karger is depicting carefully, in the scenes of "The Hole in the Wall," the methods of spiritualistic mediums, has brought that director a mass of communications, anonymous and otherwise, partly threatening and partly approving.

Warnings have reached him again.

Just as in the picture starring Alice Lake, "Holes," which will bring the innocent along with them for a full and fearless exposé of "secret methods"

of psychic demonstrations.

Both Mr. Karger and June Mathis, who wrote the scenario of the picture from Fred Jackson's play, have gone thoroughly into the matter of staging a realistic spiritualistic scene, and in regard to their research and the setting and action of the scene Mr. Karger has said:

"There is no attempt to expose legitimate mediums. I simply have made use of the mass of information Miss Mathis and I obtained in the course of a very thorough series of expeditions of research. I might add that it is proven more than an engrossing study. I hope to translate some of its illumination to the screen."

Arliss in New Picture

GEORGE ARLISS is to star in a G series version of "Idle Hands" by Earl Derr Biggers, author of "Seven Keys to Baldpate." Forrest Hulse and Henry Kolker, who respectively wrote and directed the picturization of "Destry" for Mr. Arliss, will act in a similar capacity in this new production.

Star Calls Him "Daddy"

Harde Kielkland, who plays Pauline Frederick's father in "The Jade of Jade," has played "tarhe" with her so many times that the famous star now calls him "Daddy."

PHOTOPLAYS



STANLEY COMPANY OF AMERICA

12th & Market Sts., Philadelphia, Pa.

Mac. 10, 1921, 9:30 to 11:30 P.M.

"The Affairs of Anatol"

ALLEGHENY, Frankford & Stearns, Sat. 10:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.

"The Affairs of Anatol"

APOLLO, 62nd & Thompson Sts., Matinee Daily.

CONSTANCE TALMADGE

in "LESSONS IN LOVE."

ARDACIA, Chestnut, 16th, 10th to 12th & 11th, 10:30 to 11:30 P.M.

ETHEL CLAYTON

in "BEADS."

ASTOR, Franklin & Gerard Ave., Matinee Daily.

MARY ALLISON

in "ENTRANCE."

BALTIMORE, 62nd & Baltimore Sts., Matinee Daily.

HOPE HAMPTON

in "LOVING PENALTY."

BENN, 6th & Locust, Matinee Daily.

WM. A. BRADY, "LIFE"

Added—Burke & Hutch.

BLUEBIRD, Broad & Pennsylvania, 10th & 12th.

CONWAY TEARLE

in "THE FIGHTER."

BROADWAY, Broad & 34th, 10th & 12th.

LIONEL BARRYMORE

in "THE GREAT ADVENTURE."

CAPITOL, 722 Market St., 10th to 12th & 11th, 9:30 to 11:30 P.M.

PAULINE FREDERICK

in "THE STING OF THE LASH."

COLONIAL, 6th & Shippen Ave., Matinee Daily.

"The Affairs of Anatol"

DARBY THEATRE, 10th & Locust, Sat. 10:30 A.M. to 11:30 P.M.

WILL ROGERS

in "THE GUIDE OF WOMEN."

EMPEROR, Main